

**Top Secret**

(40)X1



DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

## MEMORANDUM

### *Developments in Indochina*

**Top Secret**

160

25X1

26 November 1971

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/12/16 : CIA-RDP79M00098A000200150025-7

Approved For Release 2004/12/16 : CIA-RDP79M00098A000200150025-7

~~TOP SECRET~~

25X1

25X1

DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA

*(Information as of 1500)*

CAMBODIA

The Communists continue to shell Phnom Penh airfield. Some prominent Buddhists and influential politicians continue to be suspicious of Sirik Matak.

LAOS

The government is making gains in the Bolovens while the Communists prepare for the dry-season offensive.

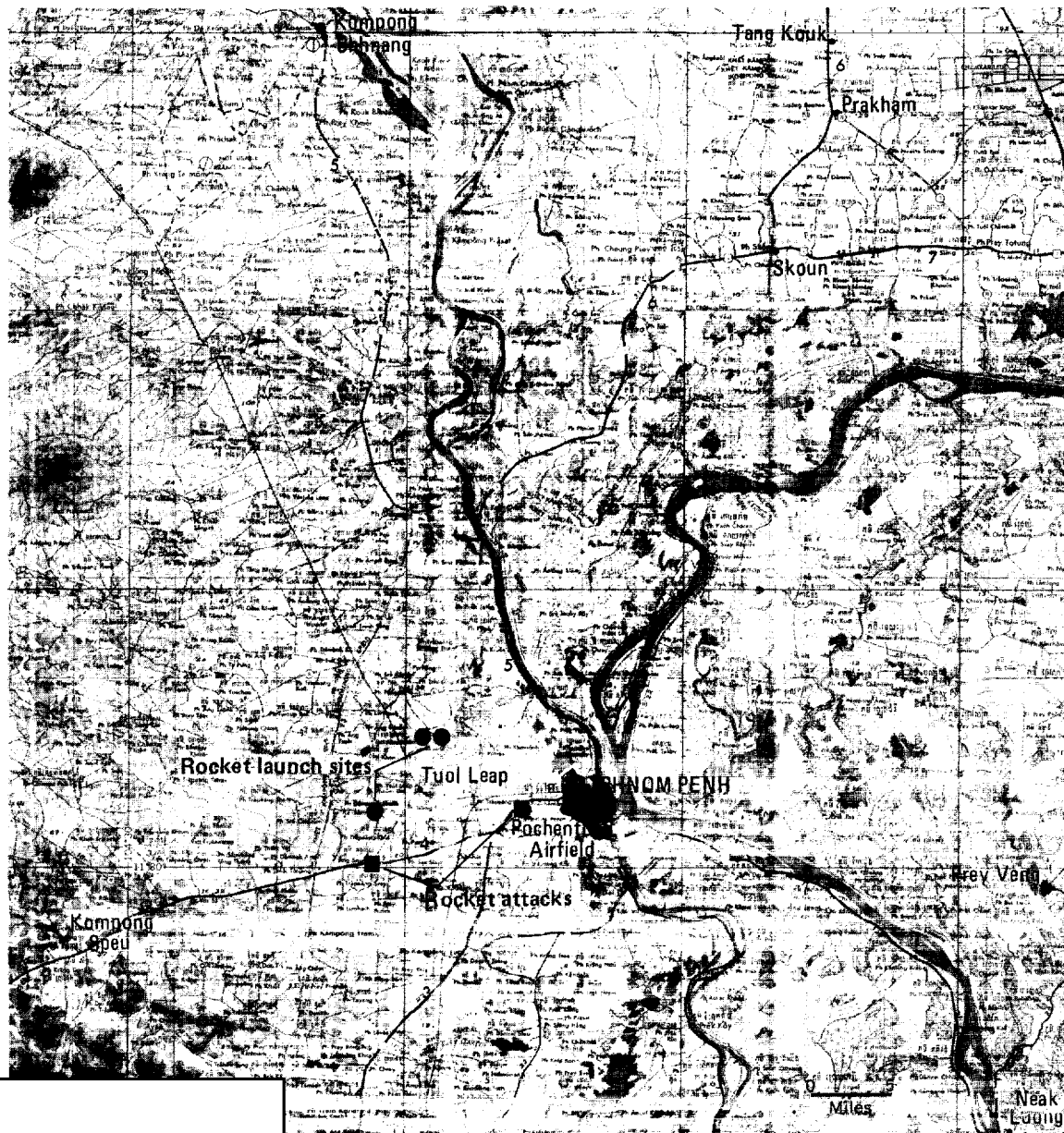
26 November 1971

~~TOP SECRET~~

25X1

25X1

## CAMBODIA: Phnom Penh Area



ILLEGIB

~~TOP SECRET~~

25X1

25X1

CAMBODIA

The Communists shelled Pochentong Airfield with rockets for the second day in succession on 26 November, but in neither case were there any casualties or damage. The US defense attaché reports that US and Cambodian aerial observers have pinpointed the launching sites for the 25 November attack against the airfield and also for a previous attack along Route 4 southwest of Pochentong. The sites are within eight miles of the airfield and underscore the government's lack of progress in moving the enemy out of the Phnom Penh area.

A total of 19 government battalions, including several elite Khmer Krom outfits, have been diverted from the Chenla II area for use in the government's clearing operations in the capital area. Most of the units in the clearing effort appear to be sticking close to the major roadways, however, and have yet to venture away from their armor support and into the areas held by elements of the Communist Phuoc Long Front.

25X1

Matak Still Vulnerable

Under the political calm in Phnom Penh there is still discontent directed at Prime Minister Delegate Sirik Matak. Matak has incurred the enmity of many because of the often unwelcome decisiveness with which he administers the day-to-day affairs of the government and the lingering suspicion that Matak is seeking a return of the monarchy despite his renunciation of his own royal lineage. A

25X1

This group is nominally under the control of a pro-government and pro - Lon Nol chief monk, Huot Tath, but it apparently has sufficient clout and determination to chart its own political course.

26 November 1971

-1-

~~TOP SECRET~~

25X1

25X1

TOP SECRET

25X1  
25X1

[REDACTED]

This same group organized a small anti-government demonstration last month.

[REDACTED]

a number of influential politicians such as former parliamentarians In Tam and Yem Sambaur and government counsellor Son Ngoc Thanh are convinced that Matak is a bad influence on Lon Nol and is motivated by authoritarian instincts. These politicians are not formally aligned, and their opposition to Matak is based on their own personal ambitions and a concern that Matak has little interest in developing Cambodia's republican form of government. Some student groups are also dissatisfied with government policies and, as the principal government administrator, Matak is the most visible target of such discontent.

25X1

[REDACTED] Matak is conscious of such opposition, he does not take it seriously and that his position could weaken as a result. Matak's position rests on the support of Prime Minister Lon Nol, whose confidence he still enjoys. As long as Lon Nol stays on the scene, Matak's position is reasonably secure, but the reports of continuing displeasure with Matak from civilian opponents indicates that he may have trouble taking over once Lon Nol is out of the picture. Without support from the civilians, Matak would be heavily dependent on the backing of the military establishment, in which he enjoys considerable but far from unanimous support.

[REDACTED]

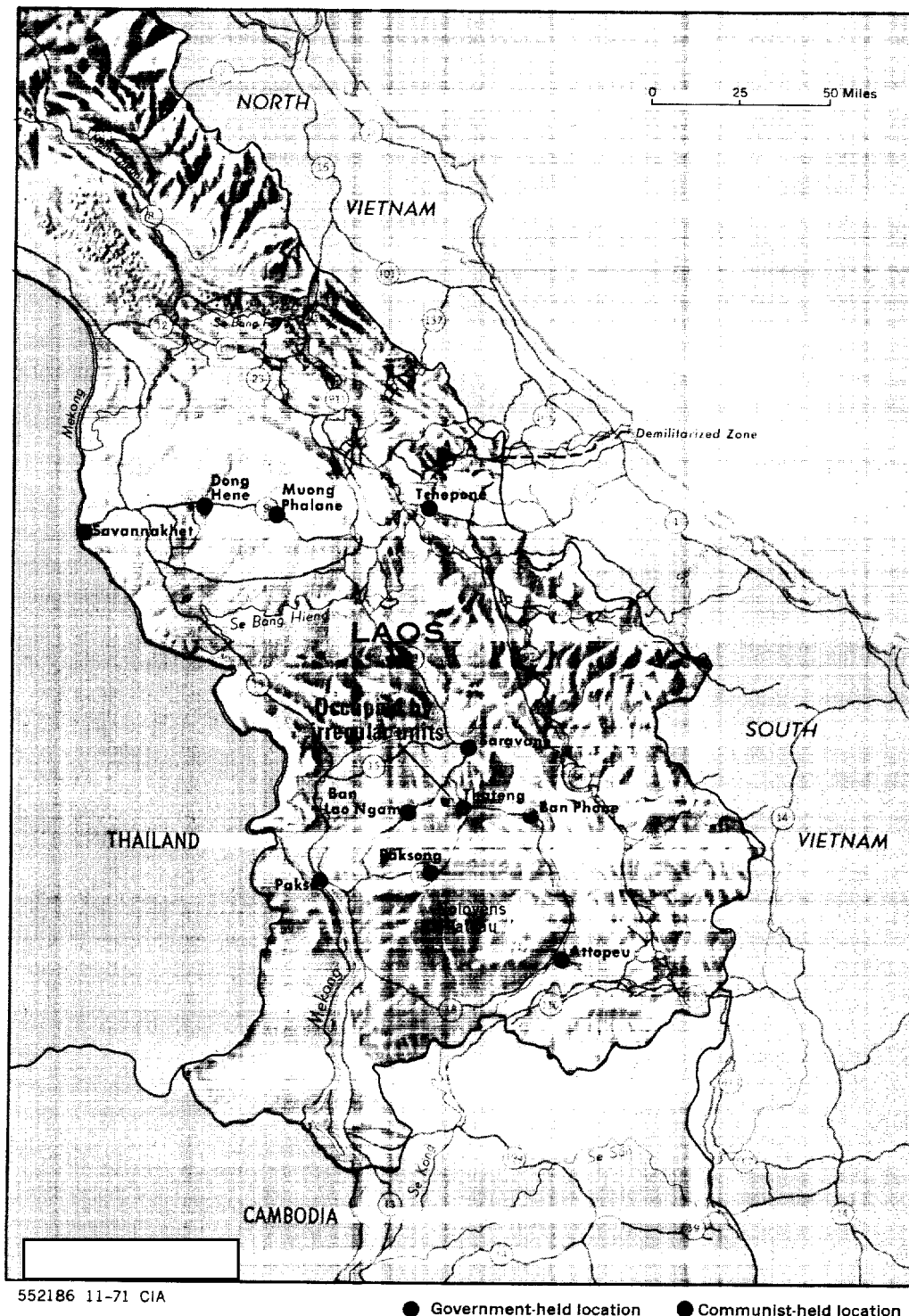
25X1

26 November 1971

-2-

TOP SECRET

25X1  
25X1



TOP SECRET

25X1  
25X1

LAOS

The government continues to score significant gains in the Bolovens Plateau area, while the Communists are still busy laying the groundwork for their dry-season offensive.

A task force of government irregulars on 25 November occupied Thateng, an important Communist logistic center north of the Bolovens since its capture by them in April 1969. The irregulars have established a fire support base on one of the key high-ground positions overlooking the town and are now attempting to locate and destroy supply caches. Another irregular force, operating in the Ban Phone region east of Thateng, has so far encountered surprisingly little resistance considering that Ban Phone lies astride a potentially important logistic route to Cambodia.

The government has now regained a sizable portion of the territory lost to the Communists in this area over the past two or three years but probably does not hope to hold all of it during the dry season. The area is important to the Communists as a western buffer to the infiltration corridor, and the North Vietnamese will probably counterattack in the coming months with forces already available and may well bring in reinforcements.

The Communists are faring better in the central panhandle where they have pushed government units well to the west of Muong Phalane. Troop commanders report substantial North Vietnamese reinforcements have moved into the area [REDACTED]

25X1  
25X1

[REDACTED] During the last dry season the Communists captured Dong Hene, and recent messages suggest that the North Vietnamese probably intend to go at least that far west on Route 9 this year.

26 November 1971

-3-

TOP SECRET

25X1  
25X1



25X1

Approved For Release 2004/12/16 : CIA-RDP79M00098A000200150025-7

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2004/12/16 : CIA-RDP79M00098A000200150025-7